



Urban Forestry Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 15, 2021 ❖ 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

NOTICE: This meeting was held pursuant to and in compliance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, Section 2.2-3708.2 and state and local legislation adopted to allow for continued government operation during the COVID-19 declared emergency. All participating members will be present at this meeting through electronic means. All members of the public may view this electronic meeting via the meeting link listed above and in the City's website calendar.

Attendees

UFC members: Kathy Philpott Costa, Amy Crumpton, David DeCoste, Stephanie Lamore, Mike Nichols

UFC City Staff Liaison: Charles Prince

City Council Liaison:

UFC Student Representative:

City Staff: Members of the Public:

- 1) Call to Order** - the meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Kathy Philpott Costa.
- 2) Reading of Virtual Meeting Notice** - was read by Kathy Philpott Costa.
- 3) Roll Call** - meeting participants identified themselves.
- 4) Approval of the [November Minutes](#)** - the November meeting minutes were approved.
- 5) Public Comments** - there were no public comments.
- 6) Staff Updates and Informational Items:**
 - a) [City Council Calendar Update](#) : The most recent Council meeting was on 12/13 and One City Center has been officially sent to all city boards and commissions (B&C's). In January, the new council will be in place. Kathy communicated with Council member

Hiscott about the UFC's interest in having Council member Hiscott or Hardi become the Council member liaison to the UFC since Ross Litkenhous did not seek reelection.

b) UFC Staff Update - Charles Prince does not have any resumes under review. He does have a potential lead that may come to fruition in January. He noted that many departments are feeling the same lack of candidate challenges to fill positions.

c) Dan Sze Memorial Tree and Plaque - the trees were planted months ago and the stone with the plaque is in place. However, the current stone is small and Charles will get it replaced. Charles will plant flowers around it in the spring, which is also when the ceremony will occur.

d) 44th Tree City USA Application Status - The application has been accepted by the state of Virginia and they expect it to be approved prior to Arbor Day. Charles is planning to apply for Tree City of the World. If we receive this designation, the City of Falls Church would be the first Tree City of the World in Virginia. A few more requirements will need to be met in order to achieve this recognition. We will need to update our inventory and tree canopy data and due to the lack of internal resources, Charles will likely hire a consultant to collect the inventory data.

e) City Code Review Status - Kathy doesn't have an update other than Tony Dudley (Stormwater Engineer) is reviewing the Stormwater Code to meet Chesapeake Bay Act requirements and is seeking input from various staff divisions about other related areas of the City code that would be good to align or update. Kathy has advocated for tree-related code to be revised as part of this effort and has sent Tony an explanation of why changes are needed. Kathy noted that the codes should be more aligned with the stormwater and environmental benefits, instead of being viewed from the aesthetic "landscaping" appeal which is the tone used when originally drafted. The City is currently evaluating the logistics and possibility of a broader ordinance review and revision. Kathy has asked for a stormwater code review summary as it relates to UFC once a project scope has been defined.

f) Volunteer Coordination Opportunity - Dave met with the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority about coordinating efforts with the elementary school GIVE Day. However, since the GIVE Day program will take place on Jan. 31, it won't work this year. In lieu of that partnership, Dave mentioned that we could get them involved with some environmental groups to clean up a park or school. More to come in the winter.

7) Current Business

- a) [Climate Change Mitigation Energy Action Plan](#) - Kathy asked Kate Walker to keep us involved during all the development phases of this plan. We may want to raise the 2.4% number since we're already that percentage above the 2010 levels. Kathy will ask Kate how the 2.4% number was determined. Amy stated that the current document does not include a lot of data about green space or soil and the preservation of large canopy trees. Charles noted that species diversity, shrubs and trees should be identified in the plan and recommended that specific examples be included. Kathy will send a bulleted list of recommendations to Kate Walker.

- b) East Falls Church Small Area Plan - this will be sent to B&C's for formal review in the spring. It has been provided to the public for initial feedback even though it is in the very early stages.
- i) [Introduction](#) - Amy inquired if the Oakwood cemetery is involved and are they interested in receiving more trees. If so, they can get a tax credit if they follow arboretum guidelines.
 - ii) [Concepts](#) - the plan should include the topic of streetscapes. The Ring Road concept does include bike lanes with the additional goal of making this area more pedestrian friendly. The City of Falls Church will be reviewing the proposal. Charles stated that we should implement a boiler plate of comments to be given to each of the projects. Recently, these comments have been ignored / or put to the bottom of the docket.

Mike provided the thought of having UFC members integrated into the other commissions. Should the city consider realigning the commissions so that the UFC isn't in a silo and only asked to review documents at the end? Integration to all other groups would be helpful, but we may need more formality with the planning commission. Amy has been an attendee to the Environmental Sustainability Council and the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board meetings. A city council liaison would be helpful to the UFC. Representation has been lax in 2021. The UFC has been tied in with the Planning Commission (Tim Stevens), but since we have a conflict with meeting times, it has been difficult to stay connected.

Amy noted that we need more influence on what we can promote on the city website. Charles will look into what content he may be able to edit on the UFC pages of the city's website.

- c) UFC Annual Report - Kathy asked the UFC members to provide input to Amy and her. Amy asked if we can attach a graphic to the annual report. Kathy and Amy will develop a 1-2 page summary with a direct ask of what we would like city council to do in order to achieve priority goals, which we will need to identify. Amy suggested we ask for a commercial "Tree Canopy Fund." We can consider eliminating the voluntary concession and ask for a replacement of the trees and what will be lost during the years that it takes the trees to mature. Stephanie added that we could consider including the city standards of surrounding jurisdictions which are more stringent than the City of Falls Church. Some successes that were identified: (1) additional environmental language in the Special Exception project criteria, (2) pushing for and achieving 18% tree canopy coverage in West Falls Church project, and (3) 68 trees planted under the Neighborhood Tree Program planting initiative - which was good considering COVID. However, the Neighborhood Tree Program (NTP) needs more volunteer help and the city needs more help if we want to expand the programs. An additional success was that the UFC helped generate momentum to keep the Fellows Property an open greenspace.
- d) Greenspace Analysis Resources - Dylan has almost finished with the table that shows the green space. Amy will create another table to add the data on tree canopy and trees lost and replaced. We may want to identify the number of trees but also the maturity of trees

based on size. Charles noted that we may need to categorize the trees based on size. Amy will start the program and will seek assistance to help create the data. We'll use this data to support our proposals of 10-15% greenspace and 15-20% for tree canopy. Amy noted that there is another document in the Google Drive that lists the nearby jurisdictions', greenspace and canopy requirements.

- e) UFC Officer Election - Due to Kathy Philpott Costa stepping down from the UFC, Amy Crumpton was elected as UFC Chair and Stephanie Lamore was elected as UFC Vice Chair. David DeCoste retained his position as UFC Secretary.

8) Future Business

- a) Counting Tree Plantings (My Tree Counts)
- b) Green Infrastructure Plan/Standards
- c) Biophilic Cities
- d) UF Management Plan
- e) UFC Standard Maintenance Agreements
- f) TOTY Revision
- g) UF Code Changes
- h) Outreach / Publicity
- i) Memorial or Commemorative Tree Designation Process
- j) Stormwater Task Force Coordination

9) Adjourn - the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Urban Forestry Commission Staff liaison: Charles Prince: 571-238-6306,
arborist@fallschurchva.gov.